

THE
C H E A T S
OF
S C A P I N.
A
F A R C E.

WRITTEN BY

M R. O T W A Y.

K. Poquelin de Molière (P.B.)

G L A S G O W :

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Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

THRIFTY,	}	Two old Merchants,	{	Mr. SANFORD.
GRIPE,				Mr. MOKES.
OCTAVIAN,	}	Their Sons,	{	Mr. NORRIS.
LEANDER,				Mr. PERCIVAL.
SCAPIN, a cheat,				Mr. ANTH. LEIGH.
SHIFT,	}	SCAPIN's instruments,	{	Mr. RICHARDS.
SKY,				Mr. —

W O M E N.

LUCIA, THRIFTY's Daughter,	Mrs. BARRY.
CLARA, GRIPE's Daughter.	Mrs. GIBS.

The SCENE, DOVER.

T H E
C H E A T S of S C A P I N.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

Enter Octavian and Shift.

O C T A V I A N.

THIS is unhappy news; I did not expect my father in two months, and yet you say he is return'd already.

Shift. 'Tis but too true.

Oct. That he arriv'd this morning?

Shift. This very morning.

Oct. And that he is come with a resolution to marry me?

Shift. Yes, Sir, to marry you.

Oct. I am ruin'd and undone; prithee advise me.

Shift. Advise you?

Oct. Yes, advise me, Thou art as surly, as if thou really couldst do me no good. Speak: has necessity taught thee no wit? hast thou no shift?

Shift. Lord, Sir, I am at present very busy in contriving some trick to save my self; I am first prudent, and then good-natur'd.

Oct. How will my father rage and storm, when he understands what things have happened in his absence? I dread his anger and reproaches.

Shift. Reproaches! wou'd I could be quit of him so easily; methinks I feel him already on my shoulders.

Oct. Disinheriting is the least I can expect.

Shift. You should have thought of this before, and not have fall'n in love with I know not whom, one that you met by chance in the Dover-coach: she is indeed a good smuggler, but God knows what she is besides; perhaps some —

Oct. Villain.

Shift. I have done, Sir, I have done.

Oct. I have no friend that can appease my father's anger, and now I shall be betray'd to want and misery.

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Shift. For my part I know but one remedy in our misfortunes.

Ost. Pry'thee, what is it?

Shift. You know that rogue and arch-cheat, Scapin.

Ost. Well; what of him?

Shift. There is not a more subtle fellow breathing; so cunning, he can cheat one newly cheated; 'tis such a wheedling rogue, I'd undertake in two hours he shall make your father forgive you all; nay, allow you money for your necessary debauches: I saw him in three days make an old cautious lawyer turn chymist and projector.

Ost. He is the fittest person in the world for my business; the impudent varlet can do any thing with the peevish old man. Pry'thee go look him out, we'll set him a-work immediately.

Shift. See where he comes—Monsieur Scapin.

Enter Scapin.

Scap. Worthy Sir!

Shift. I have been giving my master a brief account of thy most noble qualities: I told him thou wert as valiant as a ridden cockold, sincere as whores, honest as pimps in want.

Scap. Alas, Sir, I but copy you: 'tis you are brave; you scorn the gibbets, halters, and prisons which threaten you, and valiantly proceed in cheats and robberies.

Ost. Oh Scapin! I am utterly ruin'd without thy assistance.

Scap. Why, what's the matter, good Mr. Octavian?

Ost. My father is this day arriv'd at Dover with old Mr. Gripe, with a resolution to marry me.

Scap. Very well.

Ost. Thou knowest I am already marry'd: how will my father resent my disobedience? I am for ever lost, unless thou canst find some means to reconcile me to him.

Scap. Does your father know of your marriage?

Ost. I am afraid he is by this time acquainted with it.

Scap. No matter, no matter, all shall be well; I am public-spirited: I love to help distressed young gentlemen; and thank heav'n I have had good success enough.

Ost. Besides, my present want must be consider'd; I am in rebellion without any money.

Scap. I have tricks and shifts too to get that, I can cheat

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upon occasion ; but cheating is now grown an ill trade ; yet heav'n be thank'd, there were never more cullies and fools ; but the greatest rooks and cheats allow'd by public authority ruin such little under-traders as I am.

Ost. Well, get thee straight about thy business : canst thou make no use of my rogue here ?

Scap. Yes, I shall want his assistance ; the knave has cunning, and may be useful.

Shift. Ay, Sir ; but like other wise men, I am not over-valiant : Pray leave me out of this business : my fears will betray you ; you shall execute, I'll sit at home and advise.

Scap. I stand not in need of thy courage, but thy impudence, and thou hast enough of that : come, come, thou shalt along : what ! man, stand out for a beating ? that's the worst can happen.

Shift. Well, well.

Enter Clara.

Ost. Here comes my dearest Clara.

Clara. Ah me, Octavian ! I hear sad news ; they say, your father is return'd.

Ost. Alas ! 'tis true, and I am the most unfortunate person in the world ; but 'tis not my own misery that I consider, but yours : How can you bear those wants to which we must be both reduc'd ?

Clara. Love shall teach me, that can make all things easy to us ; which is a sign it is the chiefest good : but I have other cares. Will you be ever constant ? shall not your father's severity constrain you to be false ?

Ost. Never, my dearest, never.

Clara. They that love much may be allow'd some fears.

Scap. Come, come ; we have now no time to hear you speak fine tender things to one another : pray do you prepare to encounter with your father.

Clara. I tremble at the thoughts of it.

Scap. You must appear resolute at first : tell him you can live without troubling him ; threaten him to turn soldier ; or, what will frighten him worse, say, you'll turn poet. Come, I'll warrant you, we bring him to composition.

Ost. What would I give 'twere over ?

Scap. Let us practise a little what you are to do. Suppose me your father, very grave, and very angry.

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Ost. Well.

Scap. Do you look very carelessly, like a small courtier upon his country acquaintance; a little more surlily:—very well:—Now I come full of my fatherly authority——Ostavian, thou makest me weep to see thee; but alas they are not tears of joy, but tears of sorrow. Did ever so good a father beget so leud a son? nay, but for that I think thy mother virtuous, I should pronounce thou art not mine: Newgate-bird, rogue, villain, what a trick has thou play'd me in my absence? marry'd? yes: but to whom? nay, that thou knowest not. I'll warrant you some waiting-woman corrupted in a civil family, and reduc'd to one of the play-houses, remov'd from thence by some keeping coxcomb, or——

Cla. Hold Scapin, hold——

Scap. No offence, lady, I speak but another's words. Thou abominable rascal, thou shalt not have a groat, not a groat. Besides, I will break all thy bones ten times over; get thee out of my house——why, Sir, you reply not a word, but stand as bashfully as a girl that is examin'd by a bawdy judge about a rape.

Ost. Look, yonder comes my father.

Scap. Stay, Shift, and get you two gone: let me alone to manage the old fellow. [Ex. Ost. and Clara.

Enter Thrifty.

Thrif. Was there ever such a rash action?

Scap. He has been inform'd of the business, and is now so full of it that he vents it to himself.

Thrif. I would fain hear what they can say for themselves.

Scap. We are not unprovided. [At a distance.

Thrif. Will they be so impudent to deny the thing?

Scap. We never intend it.

Thrif. Or will they endeavour to excuse it?

Scap. That perhaps we may do.

Thrif. But all shall be in vain.

Scap. We'll try that.

Thrif. I know how to lay that rogue my son fast.

Scap. That we must prevent.

Thrif. And for the tattereddemallion Shift, I'll thresh him to death; I will be three years a cudgelling him.

Shift. I wonder'd he had forgot me so long.

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Thrif. Oh, ho! yonder the rascal is, that governor! he tutor'd my son finely.

Scap. Sir, I am overjoy'd at your safe return.

Thrif. Good-morrow, Scapin—indeed you have follow'd my instructions very exactly, my son has behav'd himself very prudently in my absence; has he not rascal, has he not?

[To Shift.

Scap. I hope you are very well.

Thrif. Very well—thou say'st not a word, varlet, thou say'st not a word.

Scap. Had you a good voyage, Mr. Thrifty?

Thrif. Lord, Sir! a very good voyage; pray give a man a little leave to vent his choler.

Scap. Would you be in choler, Sir?

Thrif. Ay, Sir, I would be in choler.

Scap. Pray with whom?

Thrif. With that confounded rogue there.

Scap. Upon what reason?

Thrif. Upon what reason! hast thou not heard what hath happen'd in my absence?

Scap. I heard a little idle story.

Thrif. A little idle story, quoth-a! why man, my son's undone, my son's undone.

Scap. Come, come, things have not been well carried; but I would advise you to make no more of it.

Thrif. I'm not of your opinion, I'll make the whole town ring of it.

Scap. Lord, Sir, I have storm'd about this business as much as you can do for your heart, but what are we both the better? I told him, indeed, Mr. Octavian, you do not well to wrong so good a father: I preached him three or four times asleep, but all would not do; till at last, when I had well examin'd the business, I found you had not so much wrong done you as you imagine.

Thrif. How, not wrong done me, to have my son marry'd without my consent to a beggar!

Scap. Alas, he was ordain'd to it.

Thrif. That's fine indeed; we shall steal, cheat, murder, and so be hang'd, then say we were ordain'd to it.

Scap. Truly, I did not think you so subtle a philosopher; mean, he was fatally engag'd in this affair.

Thrif. Why did he engage himself?

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Scap. Very true indeed, very true ; but fy upon you now, would you have him as wife as yourself ? young men will have their follies, witness my charge Leander ; who has gone and thrown away himself at a stranger rate than your son. I would fain know if you were not once young yourself ; yes I warrant you, and had your fraikies,

Thrif. Yes, but they never cost me any thing ; a man may be as frail and as wicked as he please, if it cost him nothing.

Scap. Alas, he was so in love with the young wench, that if he had not had her, he must have certainly hang'd himself.

Shift. Must ! why he had already done it, but that I came very seasonably and cut the rope.

Thrif. Didst thou cut the rope, dog ? I'll murder thee for that ; thou shouldst have let him hang.

Scap. Besides, her kindred surpriz'd him with her, and forc'd him to marry her.

Thrif. Then should he have presently gone, and protested against the violence at a Notary's.

Scap. O lord, Sir, he scorn'd that.

Thrif. Then might I easily have disannul'd the marriage.

Scap. Disannul the marriage ?

Thrif. Yes.

Scap. You shall not break the marriage.

Thrif. Shall not I break it ?

Scap. No.

Thrif. What, shall not I claim the privilege of a father, and have satisfaction for the violence done to my son ?

Scap. 'Tis a thing he will never consent to.

Thrif. He will not consent to !

Scap. No : would you have him consent he was hector'd into any thing ? that is to declare himself a coward : oh fy, Sir, one that has the honour of being your son, can never do such a thing.

Thrif. Pish, talk not to me of honour ; he shall do it, or be disinherited.

Scap. Who shall disinherit him ?

Thrif. That will I, Sir.

Scap. You disinherit him ! very good.

Thrif. How very good ?

Scap. You shall not disinherit him.

Thrif. Shall not I disinherit him ?

Scap. No.

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Thrif. No!

Scap. No,

Thrif. Sir, you are very merry; I shall not disinherit my Son?

Scap. No, I tell you.

Thrif. Pray, who shall hinder me?

Scap. Alas, Sir, your own self, Sir; your own self.

Thrif. I myself?

Scap. Yes, Sir, for you can never have the heart to do it.

Thrif. You shall find I can, Sir.

Scap. Come, you deceive yourself; fatherly affection must show itself, it must, it must; do not I know you were ever tender-hearted?

Thrif. Y^e are mistaken, Sir, y^e are mistaken;—pish, why do I spend my time in tittle tattle with this idle fellow?—hang-dog, go find out my rake-hell—[*To Shift.*] whilst I go to my brother Gripe and inform him of my misfortune.

Scap. In the mean time, if I can do you any service—

Thrif. O! I thank you, Sir, I thank you—[*Exit Thrif.*]

Shift. I must confess thou art a brave fellow, and our affairs begin to be in a better posture—but the money, the money—we are abominably poor, and my master has the lean vigilant duns, that torment him more than an old mother does a poor gallant, when she solicits a maintenance for her discarded daughter.

Scap. Your money shall be my next care—let me see, I want a fellow to——canst thou not counterfeit a roaring bully of Alsatia?—stalk—look big—very well. Follow me, I have ways to disguise thy voice and countenance.

Shift. Pray take a little care, and lay your plot so that I may not act the bully always; I would not be beaten like a bully.

Scap. We'll share the danger, we'll share the danger.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter Thrifty and Gripe.

Gripe. **S**IR, what you tell me concerning your son, hath strangely frustrated our designs.

Thrif. Sir, trouble not yourself at my son; I have un-

dertaken to remove all obstacles, which is the business I am so vigorously in pursuit of,

Gripe. In troth, Sir, I'll tell you what I say to you; the education of children, after the getting of 'em, ought to be the nearest concern of a father. And had you tutor'd your son with that care and duty incumbent on you, he never could so slightly have forfeited his.

Thrif. Sir, to return you a sentence for your sentence: those that are so quick to censure and condemn the conduct of others, ought first to take care that all be well at home.

Gripe. Why, Mr. Thrifty, have you heard any thing concerning my son?

Thrif. It may be I have; and it may be worse than of my my own.

Gripe. What is't, I pray? my son?

Thrif. Ev'n your own Scapin told it me, and you may hear it from him or some body else: for my part, I am your friend, and would not willingly be the messenger of ill news to one that I think so to me. Your servant: I must hasten to my council, and advise what's to be done in this case. Good bu'y till I see you again.]Exet Thrifty.

Gripe. Worse than his son! for my part I cannot imagine how; for a son to marry impudently without the consent of his father, is as great an offence as can be imagin'd, I take it; but yonder he comes.

Enter Leander.

Leand. Oh my dear father, how joyful am I to see you safely return'd! welcome, as the blessing which I am now craving will be.

Gripe. Not so fast, friend a'mine; soft and fair goes far, Sir. You are my son, as I take it.

Leand. What d'ye mean, Sir?

Gripe. Stand still, and let me look ye in the face.

Leand. How must I stand, Sir?

Gripe. Look upon me with both eyes.

Leand. Well, Sir, I do.

Gripe. What's the meaning of this report?

Leand. Report, Sir!

Gripe. Yes, report, Sir, I speak English, as I take it: what is't that you have done in my absence?

Leand. What is't, Sir, which you would have had me done?
Gripe, I do not ask you what I would have had you done?
but what have you done?

Leand. Who I, Sir? why I have done nothing at all, not
I, Sir.

Gripe. Nothing at all?

Leand. No, Sir.

Gripe. You have no impudence to speak on.

Leand. Sir, I have the confidence that becomes a man,
and my innocence.

Gripe. Very well, but Scapin, d'ye mark me, young man,
Scapin has told me some tales of your behaviour.

Leand. Scapin!

Gripe. Oh, have I caught you? that name makes ye blush,
does it? 'tis well you have some grace left.

Leand. Has he said any thing concerning me?

Gripe. That shall be examined anon: in the mean while
get you home, d'ye hear, and stay till my return: but look
to't, if thou hast done any thing to dishonour me, never think
to come within my doors, or see my face more; but expect
to be as miserable as thy folly and poverty can make thee.

[Exit Gripe.]

Leand. Very fine; I am in a hopeful condition: this rasc-
cal has betray'd my marriage, and undone me: now there is
no way left but to turn out-law, and live by rapine: and to
set my hand in, the first thing shall be to cut the throat of
that perfidious pick-thank dog that has ruin'd me.

Enter Octavian and Scapin.

Oct. Dear Scapin, how infinitely am I obliged to thee for
thy care!

Leand. Yonder he comes: I am overjoy'd to see you, good
Mr. Dog!

Scap. Sir, your most humble servant, you honour me too
far.

Leand. You act an ill fool's part; but I shall teach you.

Scap. Sir?

Oct. Hold, Leander.

Leand. No Octavian, I'll make him confess the treachery
he has committed; yes, varlet, dog, I know the trick you
have play'd me: you thought perhaps no body would have

told me. But I'll make you confess it, or I'll run my sword into your guts.

Scap. Oh, Sir, Sir, would you have the heart to do such a thing? have I done you any injury, Sir?

Leand. Yes, rascal, that you have, and I'll make you own it too, or I'll swinge it out of your already tann'd thick hide. [Beats him.]

Scap. The devil's in't. Lord, Sir, what d'ye mean? nay, good Mr. Leander, pray, Mr. Leander; 'squire Leander—As I hope to be sav'd—

Off. Pr'ythee be quiet; for shame, enough. [Interposeth.]

Scap. Well, Sir, I confess indeed that—

Leand. Well! speak, rogue.

Scap. About two months ago you may remember, a maid servant dy'd in the house—

Leand. What of all that?

Scap. Nay, Sir, if I confess you must not be angry.

Leand. Well, go on.

Scap. 'Twas said she dy'd for love of me, Sir: but let that pass.

Leand. Death, you trifling buffoon.

Scap. About a week after her death, I dress'd up myself like her ghost, and went into madam Lucia, your mistress's chamber, where she lay half in, half out of bed, with her woman by her, reading an ungodly play-book.

Leand. And was it your impudence did that?

Scap. They both believe it was a ghost to this hour. But it was myself play'd the goblin, to frighten her from the scurvy custom of lying awake at those unseasonable hours, hearing filthy plays, when she had never said her prayers.

Leand. I shall remember you for all in time and place: but come to the point, and tell me what thou hast said to my father.

Scap. To your father? I have not so much as seen him since his return, and if you'd ask him, he'll tell you so himself?

Leand. Yes, he told me himself, and told me all that thou hast said to him.

Scap. With your good leave, Sir, then he ly'd; I beg your pardon, I mean he was mistaken.

Enter Sly.

Sly. Oh, Sir, I bring you the most unhappy news.

Leand. What's the matter.

Sly. Your mistress, Sir, is yonder arrested in an action of 100*l*, they say it is a debt she left unpaid at London, in the haste of her escape hither to Dover, and if you don't raise money within these two hours to discharge her, she'll be hurry'd to prison.

Leand. Within these two hours?

Sly. Yes, Sir, within these two hours.

Leand. Ah my poor Scapin, I want thy assistance.

[Scapin walks about furiously.]

Scap. Ah my poor Scapin! now I'm your poor Scapin, now ye've need of me.

Leand. No more: I pardon thee all that thou hast done, and worse if thou art guilty of it.

Scap. No, no, never pardon me; run your sword in my guts, you'll do better to murder me.

Leand. For heav'n's sake, think no more upon that, but study now to assist me.

Ost. You must do something for him.

Scap. Yes, to have my bones broken for my pains.

Leand. Would you leave me, Scapin, in this severe extremity?

Scap. To put such an affront upon me as you did.

Leand. I wrong'd thee, I confess.

Scap. To use me like a scoundrel, a villain, a rascal, to threaten to run your sword in my guts.

Leand. I cry thy mercy with all my heart; and if thou wilt have me throw myself at thy feet, I'll do't.

Ost. Faith, Scapin, you must, you cannot but yield.

Scap. Well then: but d'you mark me, Sir, another time better words and gentler blows.

Leand. Will you promise to mind my business?

Scap. As I see convenient, care shall be taken.

Leand. But the time you know is short.

Scap. Pray, Sir, don't be so troublesome: how much money is't you want.

Leand. Two hundred pounds.

Scap. And you.

Ost. As much.

Scap. [*To Leander*] No more to be said ; it shall be done ; for you the contrivance is laid already ; and for your father, tho' he be covetous to the last degree, yet, thanks be to heav'n, he's but a shallow person, his parts are not extraordinary : do not take it ill, Sir, for you have no resemblance of him, but that y'are very like him. Begone ; I see Octavian's father coming, I'll begin with him. [*Exeunt Oct. and Leand.*]

Enter Thrifty.

Here he comes, mumbling and chewing the cud, to prove himself a clean beast,

Thrif. Oh, audacious boy, to commit so insolent a crime, and plunge himself in such a mischief.

Scap. Sir, your humble servant.

Thrif. How do you do, Scapin ?

Scap. What! are you ruminating on your son's rash actions ?

Thrif. Have I not reason to be troubled ?

Scap. The life of man is full of troubles, that's the truth on't : but your philosopher is always prepar'd. I remember an excellent proverb of the ancients, very fit for your case.

Thrif. What's that ?

Scap. Pray, mind it, 'twill do you a world of good.

Thrif. What is't, I ask you ?

Scap. Why, when the master of a family shall be absent any considerable time from his home or mansion, he ought rationally, gravely, wisely, and philosophically, to revolve within his mind all the concurrent circumstances, that may, during the interval, conspire to the conjunction of those misfortunes and troublesome accidents that may intervene upon the said absence, and the interruption of his oeconomical inspection into the remissness, negligences, frailties, and huge and perillous errors, which his substitutes, servants, or trustees, may be capable of, or liable and obnoxious unto ; which may arise from the imperfection and corruptness of ingenerated natures, or the taint and contagion of corrupted education, where by the fountain head of man's disposition becomes muddy, and all the streams of his manners and conversation run consequently defil'd and impure : these things premis'd, and fore-consider'd, arm the said prudent philosophical Pater-Familias, to find his house laid waste, his wife murder'd, his daughters deflower'd, his sous hang'd :

Cum multis aliis quae nunc perscribere longum est,
and to thank heav'n it is no worse too. D'ye mark, Sir?

Thrif. 'Sdeath! is all this a proverb?

Scap. Ay, and the best proverb, and the wisest in the world. Good Sir, get it by heart: 'twill do ye the greatest good imaginable; and don't trouble yourself; I'll repeat it to you till you have gotten it by heart.

Thrif. No, I thank you, Sir, I'll have none on't.

Scap. Pray do, you'll like it better next time; hear it once more, I say——when the master of a——

Thrif. Hold, hold, I have better thoughts of my own; I'm going to my lawyer; I'll null the marriage.

Scap. Going to law! are you mad to venture yourself among lawyers? do you not see every day how the sponges suck poor clients, and with a company of poor nonsensical terms and knavish tricks, undo the nation? no, you shall take another way.

Thrif. You have reason, if there were any other way.

Scap. Come, I have found one. The truth is, I have a great compassion for your grief; I cannot, when I see tender fathers afflicted for their sons miscarriages, but have bowels for 'em; I have much ado to refrain weeping for you.

Thrif. Truly my case is sad, very sad.

Scap. So it is; tears will burst out; I have a great respect for your person.

[Counterfeits weeping.]

Thrif. Thank you with all my heart; in troth we should have a fellow-feeling.

Scap. Ay, so we should; I assure you there is not a person in the world whom I respect more than the noble Mr. Thrifty.

Thrif. Thou art honest, Scapin. Ha' done, ha' done.

Scap. Sir, your humble servant.

Thrif. But what is your way?

Scap. Why, in brief, I have been with the brother of her whom your wicked son has married.

Thrif. What is he?

Scap. A most outrageous roaring fellow, with a down-hanging look, contracted brow, with a swell'd red face flam'd with brandy; one that frowns, puffs, and looks big at all mankind, roars out oaths, and bellows out curses enough in a day to serve a garrison a week; bred up in blood and rapine, used to slaughter from his youth upwards; one that makes no more

conscience of killing a man, than of cracking a louse; he has killed sixteen, four for taking the wall of him, five for looking too big upon him, two he shot pissing against the wall: in short, he is the most dreadful of all the race of bullies.

Thrif. Heay'n! how do I tremble at the description? but what's this to my business?

Scap. Why, he (as most bullies are) is in want, and I have brought him, by threatening him with all the courses of law, all the assistance of your friends, and your great purse, (in which I ventur'd my life ten times, for so often he drew and run at me) yet, I say, at last I have made him hearken to a composition, and to null the marriage for a sum of money.

Thrif. Thanks, dear Scapin; but what sum?

Scap. Faith he was damnably unreasonable at first, and 'gad I told him so very roundly.

Thrif. A pox on him, what did he ask?

Scap. Ask? hang him, why he ask'd 500*l*.

Thrif. 'Ouns and heart, 500*l*. five hundred devils take him —and fry and frigassce the dog: does he take me for a mad-man?

Scap. Why, so I said? and after much argument, I brought him to this: damme, says he, I am going to the army, and I must have two good horses for myself, for fear one should die; and those will coast at least threescore guineas.

Thrif. Hang him rogue! why should he have two horses? but I care not if I give threescore guineas to be rid of this affair.

Scap. Then, says he, my pistols, saddle, horse-cloth, and all, will cost twenty more.

Thrif. Why, that's fourscore.

Scap. Well reckon'd; 'faith this arithmetic is a fine art. Then I must have one for my boy will cost twenty more.

Thrif. Oh the devil! confounded dog! let him go and be damn'd, I'll give him nothing.

Scap. Sir.

Thrif. Not a sou, damn'd rascal, let him turn foot-foldier and be hang'd.

Scap. He has a man besides; would you have him go a-foot?

Thrif. Ay, and his master too, I'll have nothing to do with him.

Scap. Well, you are resolyed to spend twice as much at

Doctors-Commons, you are ; you will stand out for such a sum as this, do.

Thrif. Oh damn'd unconscionable rascal ! well, if it must be so, let him have the other twenty,

Scap. Twenty ! why it comes to forty.

Thrif. No, I'll have nothing to do in't. Oh, a covetous rogue ! I wonder he is not ashamed to be so covetous.

Scap. Why, this is nothing to the charge at Doctors-Commons ; and tho' her brother has no money, she has an uncle able to defend her.

Thrif. O eternal rogue ! well I must do't, the devil's in him, I think !

Scap. Then, says he, I must carry into France money to buy a mule, to carry——

Thrif. Let him to the devil with his mule, I'll appeal to the judges.

Scap. Nay, good Sir, think a little.

Thrif. No, I'll do nothing.

Scap. Sir, Sir, but one little mule ?

Thrif. No, not so much as an ass !

Scap. Consider.

Thrif. I will not consider, I'll go to law.

Scap. I am sure if you go to law, you do not consider the appeals, degrees of jurisdiction, the intricate proceedings, the knaveries, the craving of so many ravenous animals that will prey upon you, villanous harpies ! promoters, tipstaves, and the like ; none of which but will puff away the clearest right in the world for a bribe. On the other side, the proctor shall side with your adversary, and sell your cause for ready money ; your advocate shall be gain'd the same way, and shall not be found when your cause is to be heard. Law is a torment of all torments.

Thrif. That's true : why, what does the damn'd rogue—reckon for his mule ?

Scap. Why, for horses, furniture, and mule, and to pay some scores that are due to his landlady, he demands, and will have, two hundred pounds.

Thrif. Come, come, let's go to law.

[Thrift walks up and down in a great heat.]

Scap. Do but reflect upon——

Thrif. I'll go to law.

Scap. Do not plunge yourself.

Thrif. To law, I tell you.

Scap. Why, there's for procuration, presentation, councils, productions, proctors, attendance, and scribbling vast volumes of interrogatories, depositions, and articles, consultations and pleadings of doctors, for the register, substitute, judgments, signings—expedition-fee, besides the vast presents to them and their wives. Hang't, the fellow is out of employment, give him the money, give him it I say.

Thrif. What, two hundred pounds!

Scap. Ay, ay, you'll gain 150*l.* by it, I have summ'd it up; I say, give it him, I'faith do.

Thrif. What, two hundred pounds?

Scap. Ay, besides, you ne'er think how they'll rail at you in pleading, tell all your fornications, bastardings and commutings in their courts.

Thrif. I defy them; let them tell of my whoring, 'tis the fashion.

Scap. Peace; here's the brother.

Thrif. O heav'n! what shall I do?

Enter Shift disguised like a bully.

Shift. Damme, where's this confounded dog, this father of Octavian? null the marriage! by all the honour of my ancestors, I'll chine the villain.

Thrif. Oh! oh!

[Hides himself behind Scapin.]

Scap. He cares not, Sir, he'll not give the 200*l.*

Shift. By heav'n he shall be worms-meat within these two hours.

Scap. Sir, he has courage, he fears you not.

Thrif. You lye, I have not courage, I do fear him mortally.

Shift. He! he! he! ounds he! would all his family were in him, I'd cut off root and branch: dishonour my sister! this in his guts; what fellow's that? ha!

Scap. Not he, Sir.

Shift. Nor none of their friends?

Thrif. No, Sir: hang him, I am his mortal enemy.

Shift. Art thou the enemy of that rascal?

Thrif. Oh! ay, hang him—oh damn'd bully! [Aside.]

Shift. Give me thy hand, old boy, the next sun shall not see the impudent rascal alive?

Scap. He'll muster up all his relations against you.

Thrif. Do not provoke him, Scapin,

Shift. Would they were all here: ha! hah! hah!

[He foyns every way with his sword.]

Here I had one thro' the lungs, there another into the heart: hah! there another into the guts: ah, rogues! there I was with you: hah!—hah!

Scap. Hold, Sir, we are none of your enemies.

Shift. No, but I will find the villains out while my blood is up; I will destroy the whole family. Ha, ha,——hah!

[Exit Shift.]

Thrif. Here, Scapin, I have 100 guineas about me, take them. No more to be said. Let me never see his face again; take them, I say: this is the devil.

Scap. Will you not give them him yourself?

Thrif. No, no! I will never see him more: I shall not recover this these three months. See the business done. I trust in thee, honest Scapin: I must repose somewhere: I am mightily out of order—a plague on all bullies I say.

[Exit Thrif.]

Scap. So there's one dispatch'd; I must now find out Gripe: he's here; how heav'n brings them into my nets one after another!

Enter Gripe.

Scap. Oh heav'n! unlook'd for misfortune; poor Mr. Gripe, what wilt thou do? *[Walks about distractedly.]*

Gripe. What's that he says of me?

Scap. Is there no body can tell me news of Mr. Gripe?

Gripe. Who's there? Scapin!

Scap. How I run up and down to find him to no purpose! oh! Sir, is there no way to hear of Mr. Gripe.

Gripe. Art thou blind? I have been just under thy nose this hour.

Scap. Sir——

Gripe. What's the matter?

Scap. Oh! Sir, your son—

Gripe. Ha, my son——

Scap. Is fallen into the strangest misfortune in the world.

Gripe. What is't.

Scap. I met him a-while ago, disorder'd for something

you had said to him, wherein you very idly made use of my name. And seeking to divert his melancholy, we went to walk upon the Pier: among other things, he took particular notice of a new caper in her full trim: the captain invited us aboard, and gave us the handsomest collation I ever met with.

Gripe. Well, and where's the disaster of all this?

Scap. While we were eating, he put to sea; and when we were a good distance from the shore, he discovered himself to be an English renegade that was entertained in the Dutch service, and sent me off in his long-boat to tell you, that if you don't forthwith send him two hundred pounds, he'll carry away your son prisoner; nay, for ought I know, he may carry him a slave to Algiers.

Gripe. How, in the devil's name? 200 l.

Scap. Yes, Sir; and more than that, he has allow'd me but an hour's time; you must advise quickly what course to take to save an only son.

Gripe. What a devil had he to do a shipboard? — run quickly, Scapin, and tell the villain, I'll send my lord chief-justice's warrant after him.

Scap. O law! his warrant in the open sea: d'ye think pirates are fools?

Gripe. I'th' devil's name, what business had he a ship-board?

Scap. There is an unlucky fate that often hurries men to mischief?

Gripe. Scapin, thou must now act the part of a faithful servant.

Scap. As how, Sir?

Gripe. Thou must go bid the pirate send me my son, and stay as a pledge in his room, 'till I can raise the money.

Scap. Alas, Sir, think you the captain has so little wit as to accept of such a poor rascally fellow as I am, instead of your son?

Gripe. What a devil did he a shipboard?

Scap. D'ye remember, Sir, that you have but two hours time?

Gripe. Thou say'st he demands——

Scap. 200 l.

Gripe. 200 l. Has the fellow no conscience?

Scap. O law! the conscience of a pirate! why very few lawful captains have any.

Gripe. Has he not reason neither? does he know what the sum of 200*l.* is?

Scap. Yes, Sir, Tarpawlines are a sort of people that understand money, tho' they have no great acquaintance with sense. But for heav'n's sake dispatch.

Gripe. Here take the key of my compting-house.

Scap. So.

Gripe. And open it.

Scap. Very good.

Gripe. In the left-hand window lies the key of my garret; go take all the clothes that are in the great chest, and sell them to the brokers to redeem my son.

Scap. Sir, y'are mad; I shan't get fifty shillings for all that's there, and you know how I am straitned for time.

Gripe. What the devil did he do a shipboard?

Scap. Let shipboard alone, and consider, Sir, your son. But heav'n is my witness, I ha' done for him as much as was possible, and if he be not redeem'd, he may thank his father's kindness.

Gripe. Well, Sir, I'll go see if I can raise the money. Was it not ninescore pounds you spoke of?

Scap. No, 200 *l.*

Gripe. What 200 *l.* Dutch, ha?

Scap. No, Sir, I mean English money, 200 *l.* Sterling.

Gripe. I'th' devil's name, what business had he a shipboard? confounded shipboard!

Scap. This shipboard sticks in his stomach.

Gripe. Hold, Scapin,, I remember I received the very sum just now in gold, but did not think I should have parted with it so soon.

[He presents Scapin his purse, but will not let it go; and in his transportments pulls his arm to and fro, whilst Scapin reaches at it.]

Scap. Ay, Sir.

Gripe. But tell the captain, he is a son of a whore.

Scap. Yes, Sir.

Gripe. A dogbolt.

Scap. I shall, Sir.

Gripe. A thief, a robber, and that he forces me to pay him 200 *l.* contrary to law or equity.

Scap. Nay, let me alone with him.

Gripe. That I will never forgive him, dead or alive.

Scap. Very good.

Gripe. And that if ever I light on him, I'll murder him privately, and feed dogs with him.

[He puts up his purse, and is going away.]

Scap. Right, Sir.

Gripe. Now, make haste, and go and redeem my son.

Scap. Ay, but d'ye hear, Sir? where's the money?

Gripe. Did not I give it thee?

Scap. Indeed, Sir, you made me believe you would, but you forgot, and put it in your pocket again.

Gripe. Ha — my griefs and fears for my son make me do I know not what.

Scap. Ay, I see it does indeed.

Gripe. What the devil did he do a shipboard?

Damn'd pirate, damn'd renegade, all the devils in hell pursue thee.

[Exit.]

Scap. How easily a miser swallows a load, and how difficultly he disgorges a grain? but I'll not leave him so; he's like to pay in other coin, for telling tales of me to his son.

Enter Octavian and Leander.

Scap. Well, Sir, I have succeeded in your business, there's 200 l. which I have squeez'd out of your father.

[To Octavian.]

Oct. Triumphant Scapin.

Scap. But for you I can do nothing—

[To Leander.]

Leand. Then may I go hang myself. Friends both, adieu.

Scap. D'ye hear, d'ye hear, the devil has no such necessity for you yet, that you need ride post. With much ado I've got your business done too.

Leand. Is't possible?

Scap. But on condition that you permit me to revenge myself on your father for the trick he has served me.

Leand. With all my heart, at thy own discretion, good honest Scapin.

Scap. Hold your hand, there's 200 l.

Leand. My thanks are too many to pay now: farewell, dear son of Mercury, and be prosperous.

Scap. Gramercy, pupil. Hence we gather,

Give son the money, hang up father.

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter Lucia and Clara.

Lucia. **W**AS ever such a trick play'd, for us to run away from our governesses, where our careful fathers had plac'd us, to follow a couple of young gentlemen, only because they said they lov'd us? I think 'twas a very noble enterprize! I am afraid the good fortune we shall get by it, will very hardly recompense the reputation we have lost by it.

Clara. Our greatest satisfaction is, that they are men of fashion and credit, and for my part I long ago resolv'd not to marry any other, nor such a one neither, till I had a perfect confirmation of his love; and 'twas an assurance of Octavian's that brought me hither.

Luc. I must confess, I had no less a sense of the faith and honour of Leander.

Clara. But seems it not wonderful, that the circumstances of our fortune should be so nearly ally'd, and ourselves so much strangers? besides, if I mistake not, I see something in Leander, so much resembling a brother of mine of the same name, that did not the time since I saw him make me fearful, I should be often apt to call him so.

Luc. I have a brother too, whose name's Octavian, bred in Italy, and just as my father took his voyage, return'd home; not knowing where to find me, I believe is the reason I have not seen him yet. But if I deceive not myself, there is something in your Octavian that extremely refreshes my memory of him.

Clara. I wish we might be so happy as we are inclin'd to hope; but there is a strange blind side in our natures, which always make us apt to believe, what we most earnestly desire.

Luc. The worst at last, is but to be forsaken by our fathers: and for my part, I had rather lose an old father than a young lover, when I may with reputation keep him, and secure myself against the imposition of fatherly authority.

Clara. How unsufferable it is to be sacrific'd to the arms of

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a nanseous blockhead, that has no other sense than to eat and drink when 'tis provided for him, rise in the morning, and go to bed at night, and with much ado be persuaded to keep himself clean!

Luc. A thing of mere flesh and blood, and that of the worst sort too, with a squinting meagre hang-down countenance, that looks as if he always wanted physick for the worms.

Cla. Yet such their silly parents are generally most indulgent to, like apes never so well pleas'd, as when they're fondling with their ugly issue.

Luc. Twenty to one, but to some such charming creatures our careful fathers had designed us.

Cla. Parents think they do their daughters the greatest kindness in the world, when they get them fools for their husbands; and yet are very apt to take it ill if they make the right use of them.

Luc. I'd no more be bound to spend my days in marriage to a fool, because I might rule him, than I would ride an ass, because the creature was gentle.

Cla. See, here's Scapin, as full of designs and affairs, as a callow statesman at a treaty of peace.

Enter Scapin.

Scap. Ladies!

Cla. Oh, monsieur Scapin! what's the reason you have been such a stranger of late?

Scap. Faith, ladies, business, business has taken up my time; and truly I love an active life, love my business extremely.

Luc. Methinks tho', this should be a difficult place for a man of your excellencies to find employment in.

Scap. Why faith, madam, I'm never shy to my friends: my business is, in short, like that of all other men of business, diligently contriving how to play the knave, and cheat to get an honest livelihood.

Cla. Certainly men of wit and parts need never be driven to indirect courses.

Scap. Oh, madam! wit and honesty, like oil and vinegar, with much ado mingle together, give a relish to a good fortune, and pass well enough for sauce, but are very thin fare of themselves. No, give me your knave, your thorow-pac'd knave; hang his wit, so he be but rogue enough.

Luc. You're grown very much out of humour with wit, Scapin : I hope yours has done you no prejudice of late.

Scap. No, Madam, your men of wit are good for nothing, dull, lazy, restive snails ; 'tis your undertaking, impudent, pushing fool that commands his fortune.

Cla. You are very plain and open in this proceeding, whatever you are in others.

Scap. Dame fortune, like most others of the female sex, (I speak all this with respect to your ladyship) is generally most indulgent to the nimble mettled blockheads ; men of wit are not for her turn, even too thoughtful when they should be active : why, who believes any man of wit to have so much as courage ? no, ladies, if ye've any friends that hope to raise themselves, advise them to be as much fools as they can, and they'll ne'er want patrons : and for honesty, if your ladyship think fit to retire a little farther, you shall see me perform upon a gentleman that's coming this way.

Cla. Pr'ythee, Lucia, let us retreat a little, and take this opportunity of some divertisement ; which has been very scarce here hitherto,

Enter Shift with a sack.

Scap. Oh Shift !

Shift. Speak not too loud, my master's coming.

Scap. I am glad on't, I shall teach him to betray the secrets of his friend. If any man puts a trick upon me without return, may I lose this nose with the pox, without the pleasure of getting it.

Shift. I wonder at thy valour, thou art continually venturing that body of thine, to the indignity of bruises and indecent ballinadoes.

Scap. Difficulties in adventures make them pleasant when accomplish'd.

Shift. But your adventures, how comical soever in the beginning, are sure to be tragical in the end.

Scap. 'Tis no matter, I hate your pusillanimous spirit : revenge and leachery are never so pleasant as when you venture hard for them ; begone ; here comes my man.

Enter Gripe.

Oh, Sir, Sir, shift for yourself, quickly Sir, quickly Sir, for heav'n's sake.

Gripe. What's the matter, man?

Scap. Heav'n! is this a time to ask questions? will you be murder'd instantly? I am afraid you'll be kill'd within these two minutes.

Gripe. Mercy on me! kill'd for what?

Scap. They are every where looking for you.

Gripe. Who? who?

Scap. The brother of her whom your son has marry'd; he's a captain of a privateer, who has all sorts of rogues, English, Scotch, Welch, Irish, French, under his command, and all lying in wait now, or searching for you to kill you, because you would null the marriage; they run up and down, crying, where is the rogue Gripe? where is the dog? where is the slave Gripe? they watch for you so narrowly, that there's no getting home to your house.

Gripe. Oh Scapin! what shall I do? what will become of me?

Scap. Nay, heav'n knows; but if you come within their reach, they'll De Wit you, they'll tear you in pieces; hark.

Gripe. Oh Lord!

Scap. Hum, 'tis none of them.

Gripe. Canst thou find no way for my escape, dear Scapin?

Scap. I think I have found one.

Gripe. Good Scapin, shew thyself a man now.

Scap. I shall venture being most immoderately beaten.

Gripe. Dear Scapin, do; I will reward thee bounteously; I'll give thee this suit when I have worn it eight or nine months longer.

Scap. Listen! who are these?

Gripe. God forgive me, Lord have mercy upon us.

Scap. No, there's no body; look, if you'll save your life go into this sack presently.

Gripe. Oh! who's there?

Scap. No body; get into the sack, and stir not, whatever happens; I'll carry you as a bundle of goods thro' all your enemies to the major's house in the castle.

Gripe. An admirable invention, oh Lord! quick.

[Gets into the sack.]

Scap. Yes, 'tis an excellent invention, if you knew all; keep in your head. Oh, here's a rogue coming to look for you.

Scapin counterfeits a Welshman.

' Do you hear, I pray you, where is Leander's father, look you.'

In his own voice.

How should I know? what would you have with him——
lie close.

[Aside to Gripe.

' Have with him! look you, hur has no great pus'ness, but hur would have satisfactions and reparations, look you, for credits and honours; by St. Tavy he shall not put the injuries and affronts upon my captains, look you now, Sir.'

He affront the captain, he meddles with no man.

' You lye, Sir, look you, and hur will give you beatings and chastisements for your contradictions, when her Welse plood's up, look you, and hur will cudgel your packs and your nottles for it; take you that, pray you now.'

[Beats the sack.

Hold, hold, will you murder me? I know not where he is, not I.

' Hur will teach fancy jacks how they profook hur Welse ploods and hur chollers; and for the old rogue, hur will have his guts and his plood, look you, Sir, or hur will never wear leek upon St. Tavy's day more, look you.'

Oh! he has maul'd me, a damn'd Welsh rascal.

Gripe, You? the blows fell upon my shoulders. Oh! oh!

Scap. 'Twas only the end of the stick fell on you, the main substantial part of the cudgel lighted on me.

Gripe. Why did not you stand further off?

Scap. Peace——here's another rogue.

In a Lancashire dialect.

' Yaw fellee, wi'th' sack there, done yau know whear th'awd rascatt, Griap is.'

Not I; but here is no rascal.

' Yaw leen, yaw douge, yaw know weel enuh whear he is, an yaw don teel, ond that he is a foo rascatt as any is in aw the tawn; I's tell a that by'r lady.'

Not I, Sir, I know neither, Sir, not I.

' By th' melfs, an ay tack thee in hont, ay's raddle the bones on thee, ay's keeble thee to some tune.'

Me, Sir? I don't understand you.

' Why, tha'wart his man, thaw hobble. I'll snite th' nase o' thee.'

Hold, hold, Sir, what would you have with him?

‘ Why, I mun knock him dawne with my kibbo, the first
 ‘ bawt to the grawnt, and then I mun beat him aw to pap,
 ‘ by th’ mefs, and after ay mun cut off the lugs and the
 ‘ neas on ’em, and ay wo he’ll be a pretty swately fellee,
 ‘ bawt lugs and naes.’

Why, truly, Sir, I know not where he is, but he went
 down that lane.

‘ This lone, sayn ye? ays find him, by’r lady, an he be
 ‘ above grawnt.’

So, he’s gone, a damn’d Lancashire rascal.

Gripe, Oh good Scapin! go on quickly.

Scap. Hold, here’s another. [*Gripe pops in his head.*]

In an Irish tone.

‘ Dost thou hear, sackman? I pridee fare is that damn’d
 ‘ dog, Gripe?’

Why, what’s that to you? what know I?

‘ Fat’s dat to me, joy? by my soul, joy, I will lay a great
 ‘ blow upon thy pate, and de devil take me, but I will make
 ‘ thee know fare he is indeed, or I’ll beat upon thee till thou
 ‘ dost know, by my salvation indeed.’

I’ll not be beaten.

‘ Now de devil take me, I swear by him that made me,
 ‘ if thou dost not tell fare is Gripe, but I will beat thy fa-
 ‘ ther’s child very much indeed.

What would you have me to do? I can’t tell where he is.
 But what would you have with him?

‘ Fat would I have wid him? by my soul, if I do see him,
 ‘ I will make murther upon him for my captain’s sake.’

Murder him? He’ll not be murder’d.

‘ If I do lay my eyes upon him, gad I will put my sword
 ‘ into his bowels, de devil take me indeed. Far hast dow in
 ‘ dat sack, joy? by my salvation I will look into it.

But you shall not. What have you to do with it?

‘ By my soul, joy, I will put my rapier into it.

Gripe. Oh! oh.

‘ Fat, it does grunt, by my salvation de devil take me I
 ‘ will see it indeed.’

You shall not see my sack; I will defend it with my life.

‘ Den I vill make beat upon thy body; take that, joy, and
 ‘ that, and that, upon my soul, and so I do take my leave,
 ‘ joy.’ [*Beats him in the sack.*]

A plague on him, he’s gone; he has almost kill’d me.

Gripe. Oh ! I can hold no longer ; the blows all fell on my shoulders !

Scap. You can't tell me ; they fell on mine : oh my shoulders !

Gripe. Yours ? oh my shoulders !

Scap. Peace, th'are coming.

In a hoarse seaman's voice.

' Where is the dog ? I'll lay him on fore and aft, swinge him with a cat o'nine tails, keel-haul, and then hang him at the main-yard.'

In broken French-English.

' If dere be no more men in England, I vill kille him, I will put my rapire in his body, I will give him two tree pushe in de gutte.'

Here Scapin acts a number of them together.

' We mun go this way—o' the right hand, no to th' left hand—lie close—' search ev'ry where—by my salvation I will kill the damn'd dog — and we do catch 'en, we'll tear 'en in pieces, and I do hear he went thick way — no, straight forward. Hold, here is his man, where's your master—damn me, where ? in hell ? speak—hold, not so furiously--' and you don't tell us where he is, we'll murder thee'—

Do what you will, gentlemen, I know not.

' Lay on him thick, thwack him soundly.'

Hold, hold, do what you will, I ne'er betray my master.

' Knock 'en down, beat 'en zoundly, to 'en, at 'en, at 'en, at'—

[As he is going to strike, Gripe peeps out, and Scapin takes to his heels.]

Gripe. Oh dog, traitor, villain ! is this your plot ? would you have murder'd me, rogue ? unheard of impudence.

Enter Thrifty.

Oh, brother Thrifty ! you come to see me loaden with disgrace ; the villain Scapin has, I am sensible now, cheated me of 200*l*. This beating brings all into my memory.

Thrif. The impudent varlet has gull'd me of the same sum.

Gripe. Nor was he content to take my money, but hath abus'd me at that barbarous rate that I am asham'd to tell it ; but he shall pay for it severely.

Thrif. But this is not all, brother ; one misfortune is the forerunner of another : just now I received letters from London, that both our daughters have run away from their governesses, with two wild debauch'd young fellows, that they fell in love with.

Enter Lucia and Clara.

Luc. Was ever so malicious impudence seen — hah — surely, if I mistake not, that should be my father.

Cl. And the other mine, whom Scapin has us'd thus.

Luc. Bless us! returned and we not know of it?

Cl. What will they say to find us here?

Luc. My dearest father, welcome to England?

Thrif. My daughter Luce?

Luc. The same, Sir.

Gripe. My Clara here too?

Cl. Yes, Sir, and happy, to see your safe arrival.

Thrif. What strange destiny has directed this happiness to us?

Enter Octavian.

Gripe. Heyday?

Thrif. Oh, son! I have a wife for you.

Oct. Good father, all your propositions are vain; I must needs be free, and tell you, I am engaged.

Thrif. Look you now; is not this very fine? now I have a mind to be merry, and to be friends with you, you'll not let me now, will you? I tell you, Mr. Gripe's daughter here—

Oct. I'll never marry Mr. Gripe's daughter, Sir, as long as I live: no, yonder's she that I must love, and can never entertain the thoughts of any other.

Cl. Yes, Octavian, I have at last met with my father, and all our fears and troubles are at an end.

Thrif. Law ye now, you would be wiser than the father that begot you, would you? did not I always say you should marry Mr. Gripe's daughter! but you do not know your sister Luce.

Oct. Unlook'd for blessing! why she's my friend Leander's wife!

Thrif. How Leander's wife!

Gripe. What, my son Leander!

Oct. Yes, Sir, your son Leander.

Gripe. Indeed? well, brother Thrifty, 'tis true the boy was always a good-natur'd boy. Well, now I am so overjoy'd that I could laugh till I shook my shoulders, but that I dare not, they are so sore. But look here he comes.

Enter Leander.

Leand. Sir, I beg your pardon, I find my marriage is discovered; nor would I indeed have longer conceal'd it; this is my wife, I must own her.

Gripe. Brother Thrifty, did you ever see the like, did you ever see the like? ha!

Thrif. Own her, quoth-a! why kiss her, kiss her, man; Odsbodikins, when I was a young fellow, and was first marry'd, I did nothing else for three months. O my conscience I got my boy Octi there, the first night, before the curtains were quite drawn!

Gripe. Well, 'tis his father's own child. Just so, brother, was it with me upon my wedding-day, I could not look upon my dear without blushing; but when we were a-bed, Lord ha' mercy upon us—but I'll no more.

Leand. Is then my father reconcil'd to me?

Gripe. Reconcil'd to thee! why I love thee at my heart, man, at my heart; why 'tis my brother Thrifty's daughter, Mrs. Lucy, whom I always design'd for thy wife; and that's thy sister Clara marry'd to Mr. Octa there.

Leand. Octavian, are we then brothers? there is nothing that I could have rather wish'd after the compleating of my happiness with my charming Lucia.

Thrif. Come, Sir, hang up your compliments in the hall at home, they are old and out of fashion. Shift go to the inn, and bespeak a supper may cost more money than I have ready to pay for't, for I am resolv'd to run in debt to night.

Shift. I shall obey your commands, Sir.

Thrif. Then d'you hear, send out and muster up all the fiddlers (blind or not blind, drunk or sober) in the town; let not so much as the roaster of tunes, with his crack'd cymbal in a case, escape ye.

Gripe. Well, what would I give now for the fellow that sings the song at my lord mayor's feast; I myself would make an epithalamium by way of sonnet, and he should set a tune to it; 'twas the prettiest he had last time.

Enter Sly.

Sly. Oh gentlemen, here is the strangest accident fallen out.

Thrif. What's the matter?

Sly. Poor Scapin.

Gripe. Ha! rogue, let him be hang'd. I'll hang him myself.

Sly. Oh Sir, that trouble you may spare; for passing by a place where they were building, a great stone fell upon his head, and broke his skull so, you may see his brains.

Thrift. Where is he?

Sly. Yonder he comes.

33 THE CHEATS OF SCAPIN.

Enter Scapin between two, his head wrapt up in linen as if he had been wounded.

Scap. Oh me! oh me! gentlemen, you see me, you see me in a sad condition, cut off like a flower in the prime of my years: but yet I could not die without the pardon of those I have wrong'd; yes, gentlemen, I beseech you to forgive me all the injuries that I have done; but more especially, I beg of you Mr. Thrifty, and my good master, Mr. Gripe.

Thrif. For my part, I pardon thee freely, go, and die in peace.

Scap. But 'tis you, Sir, I have most offended, by the inhuman bastinadoes, which——

Gripe. Prythee, speak no more of that, I forgive thee too.

Scap. 'Twas a most wicked insolence in me, that I should with a vile crab-tree cudgel——

Gripe. Pish, no more, I am satisfy'd.

Scap. And now so near my death, 'tis an unexpressible grief that I should dare to lift my hand against——

Gripe. Hold thy peace, or die quickly, I tell thee I have forgot all——

Scap. Alas! how good a man you are! but, Sir, d'you pardon me freely, and from the bottom of your heart, those merciless drubs that——

Gripe. Pr'ythee speak no more of it; I forgive thee freely, here's my hand upon't.

Scap. Oh! Sir, how much your goodness revives me!

[Pulls off his cap.

Gripe. How's that! friend, take notice, I pardon thee, but 'tis upon condition that you are sure to die.

Scap. Oh me! I begin to faint again.

Thrif. Come, fy brother, never let revenge employ your thoughts now; forgive him, forgive him without any condition.

Gripe. A dewce out't, brother, as I hope to be sav'd, he beat me basely and scurvily, never stir he did; but since you will have it so, I do forgive him.

Thrif. Now, then, let's to supper, and in our mirth drown and forget all troubles.

Scap. Ay, and let them carry me to the lower end of the table;

Where in my chair of state I'll sit at ease.

And eat and drink, that I may die in peace. [A dance.

[Exit omnes.